Amendments to the CLAIMS:

The listing of Claims replaces all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of CLAIMS:

Claims 1 – 6. (Cancelled).

Claim 7. . (Presently amended). A cross-linkable, expandable blank for an elastomeric safety support having a cellular structure comprising closed cells, said support being capable of being mounted on a wheel rim within a tire, said blank comprising a diene elastomer having a molar ratio of diene units of less than 15%, [and] water in an amount of from 3 to 6 phr and a blowing agent in an amount of from 15 to 30 phr.

Claim 8. (Presently amended). A cross-linkable, expandable blank for an elastomeric safety support having a cellular structure comprising closed cells, said support being capable of being mounted on a wheel rim within a tire, said blank comprising a diene elastomer having a molar ratio of diene units of less than 15%, water in an amount of about 3 to 6 phr, a blowing agent in an amount of from 15 to 30 phr and a reinforcing filler comprising silica in an amount of from 10 to 30 phr and carbon black.

Claim 9. (Previously presented). The cross-likable blank according to Claim 7 wherein the diene elastomer is a copolymer of isobutylene and a co-monomer selected from between isoprene and paramethylstyrene.

Claim 10. (Presently amended). A cross-linked expanded elastomeric safety support capable of being mounted on a wheel rim within a tire and having a cellular structure comprising closed cells obtained by a process comprising

kneading by themomechanical working a rubber composition comprising a diene elastomer having a molar ratio of diene units of less than 15%, water in an amount of from 3 to 6 phr, a blowing agent in an amount from about 15 to 30 phr that provides for formation of the cellular structure and a vulcanization system,

forming the rubber composition after thermomechanical working into a cross-linkable expandable support blank,

curing the blank in a mold followed by demolding the cured blank, and

expanding by substantially decomposing the blowing agent and vulcanizing the cured blank,

said safety support comprising a reinforcing filler comprising silica in an amount of from 10 to 30 phr and a residual amount of blowing agent in an amount greater than 2 phr.

Claim 11. (Presently amended). A cross-linked expanded elastomeric safety support capable of being mounted on a wheel rim within a tire and having a cellular structure comprising closed cells obtained by a process comprising

kneading by themomechanical working a rubber composition comprising a diene elastomer having a molar ratio of diene units of less than 15%, water in an amount of

from 3 to 6 phr, azobisformamide in an amount from about 15 to 30 phr as the [a] blowing agent that provides for formation of the cellular structure and a vulcanization system,

forming the rubber composition after thermomechanical working into a cross-linkable expandable support blank,

curing the blank in a mold followed by demolding the cured blank, and

expanding by substantially decomposing the blowing agent and vulcanizing the cured blank,

said safety support comprising a reinforcing filler comprising silica in an amount of from 10 to 30 phr and residual azobisformamide in an amount greater than 2 phr.

Claim 12. (Presently amended). The cross-linked safety support of Claim 10 wherein the support comprises [the] residual blowing agent in an amount greater than 5 phr.

Claim 13. (Presently amended). The cross-linked safety support of Claim 11 wherein the support comprises residual azobisformamide in an amount greater than 5 phr.

Claim 14. (Original). The cross-linked support of Claim 10 wherein the diene elastomer is a copolymer of isobutylene and a co-monomer selected from between isoprene and paramethylstyrene.

Claim 15. (Original). The cross-linked support of Claim 11 wherein the diene elastomer is a copolymer of isobutylene and a co-monomer selected from between isoprene and paramethylstyrene.

Claim 16. (Cancelled).

Claim 17. (Previously presented). The cross-linked expanded elastomeric safety support of Claim 10 wherein said rubber composition further comprises a reinforcing filler comprising silica in an amount from 10 to 30 phr and carbon black.

Claim 18. (Previously presented). The cross-linked expanded elastomeric safety support of Claim 11 wherein said rubber composition further comprises a reinforcing filler comprising silica in an amount from 10 to 30 phr and carbon black.

Claim 19. (Presently amended). The cross-linked safety support of Claim 17 wherein the support comprises [the] residual blowing agent in an amount greater than 5 phr.

Claim 20. (Presently amended). The cross-linked safety support of Claim 18 wherein the support comprises residual azobisformamide in an amount greater than 5 phr.

Claim 21. (Previously presented). The cross-linked support of Claim 17 wherein the diene elastomer is a copolymer of isobutylene and a co-monomer selected from between isoprene and paramethylstyrene.

Claim 22. (Previously presented). The cross-linked support of Claim 18 wherein the diene elastomer is a copolymer of isobutylene and a co-monomer selected from between isoprene and paramethylstyrene.

Claim 23. (Previously presented). The cross-linkable blank according to Claim 8 wherein the diene elastomer is a copolymer of isobutylene and a co-monomer selected from between isoprene and paramethylstyrene.